

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please cancel claims 61-77.

Listing of Claims:

1-17. (Canceled).

18. (Original) A method for planarizing a microelectronic substrate with a planarizing machine having a planarizing medium that includes a non-abrasive polishing pad and an abrasive slurry, the method comprising:

moving one of the polishing pad and the microelectronic substrate relative to the other of the polishing pad and the microelectronic substrate to remove material from the microelectronic substrate; and

maintaining a pH of the microelectronic substrate at an approximately constant level by maintaining a pH of the abrasive slurry at an approximately constant level while reducing a relative velocity between the microelectronic substrate and the polishing pad to approximately zero.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein maintaining the pH of the microelectronic substrate includes reducing attractive forces between the microelectronic substrate and the material removed from the microelectronic substrate.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the polishing pad has a planarizing surface adjacent the microelectronic substrate, further comprising passing the abrasive slurry upwardly through openings in the planarizing surface of the polishing pad.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the polishing pad has a planarizing surface adjacent the microelectronic substrate, further comprising depositing the abrasive slurry downwardly onto the planarizing surface of the polishing pad.

22. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising selecting the abrasive slurry to include ammonia.

23. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising selecting the abrasive slurry to have a pH in the range of approximately 10.6 to approximately 11.4.

24. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising selecting the abrasive slurry to have a pH of approximately 11.0.

25. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein maintaining the pH of the microelectronic substrate includes reducing the relative velocity between the microelectronic substrate and the polishing pad to approximately zero over a period of time in the range of approximately twenty seconds to approximately forty seconds.

26. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising removing polishing pad material from the polishing pad by contacting the polishing pad with a conditioning liquid having a pH approximately equal to a pH of the abrasive slurry.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26 wherein the polishing pad has a planarizing surface for removing material from the microelectronic substrate, further comprising buffing the microelectronic substrate on the planarizing surface by engaging the microelectronic substrate with the polishing pad after removing polishing pad material from the planarizing surface and moving at least one of the polishing pad and the microelectronic substrate relative to the other of the polishing pad and the microelectronic substrate.

28. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising moving the microelectronic substrate from the polishing pad to a rinsing location spaced apart from the polishing pad and rinsing the microelectronic substrate at the rinsing location with a rinsing fluid having a pH approximately equal to a pH of the abrasive slurry.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28 wherein rinsing the microelectronic substrate includes rinsing the microelectronic substrate for a period of approximately five seconds.

30. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising selecting the rinsing liquid to include deionized water and tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30 wherein selecting the rinsing liquid includes selecting a volume of the tetramethyl ammonium hydroxide to be approximately 0.006% of a volume of the deionized water.

32. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising selecting the rinsing liquid to have a pH in the range of approximately 10.6 to approximately 11.4.

33. (Original) The method of claim 28, further comprising selecting the rinsing liquid to have a pH of approximately 11.0.

34-60 (Canceled)

61-77. (Canceled)